

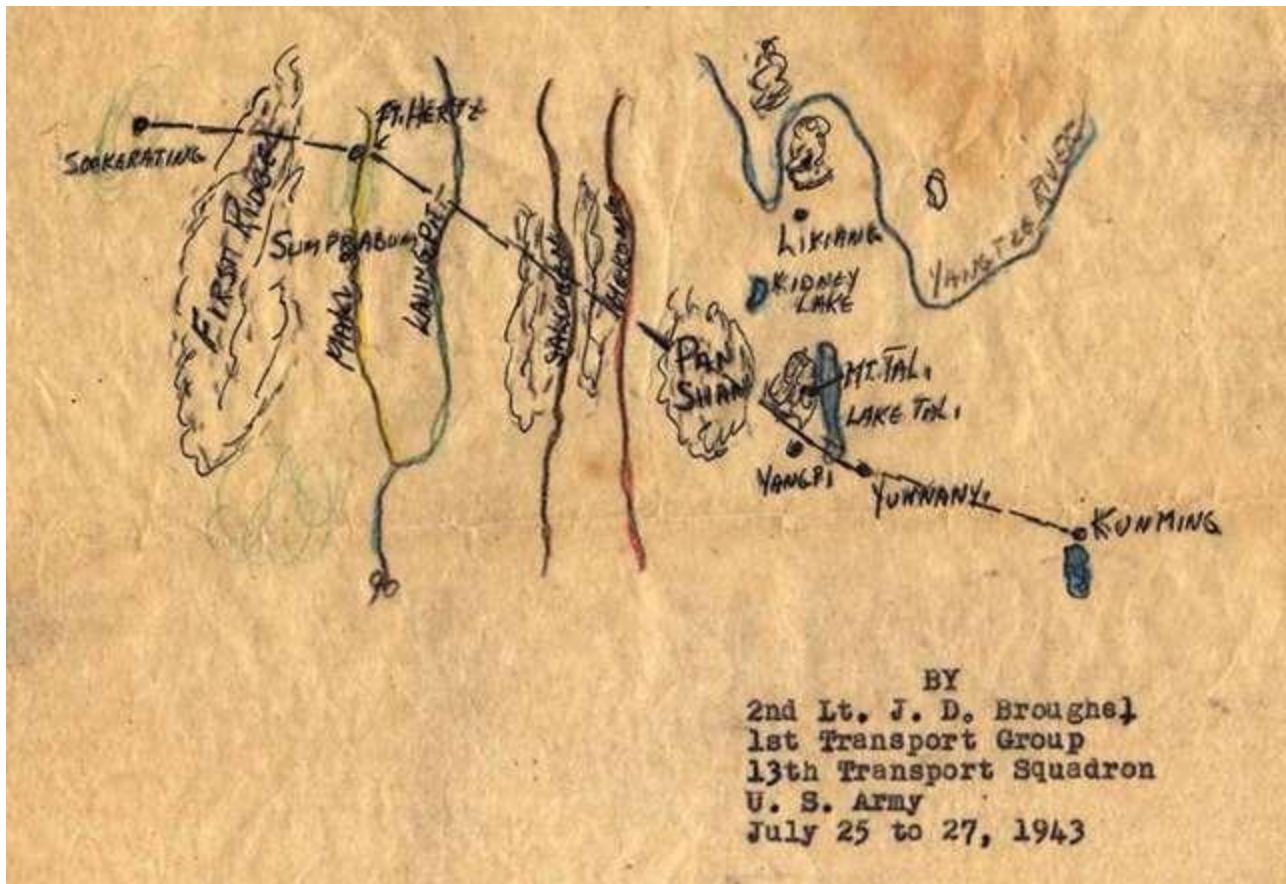
OVER THE HUMP/ROCKIN? THE RIDGE

From: Robert Menefee

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My mother died ten years ago.
In the early 1940's she served with The Red Cross in Assam.
A few days ago, I was going through some old papers
which had been my mother's.
I found a couple old photos of her in Assam
- one of her standing under a Douglas C-47 with some pilots and crew.
I also found two poems and a hand drawn map.
The poems were written by men who flew over the hump -
they do convey something of what it must have been like.

Here are the poems and the map:



OVER THE HUMP

By
2nd Lt. J. D. Broughel
1st Transport Group
13th Transport Squadron
U. S. Army
July 25 to 27, 1943

OH! History's page through every age
Tells of men who accomplish things,
But few there are shine a brighter star
Than those of whom this bard sings.

I've flown up and down the airways
From Hartford to Cooch-Behar
And have flown on instruments hours on end
With a line on a single star.

Up where the oxygens needed;
Down where it's gusty and rough;
When the radio compass is bouncin' around
And the going is really tough;

I've flown from Natal to Ascension
When the scum wasn't drained from the sumps,
But it's nothin' compared to the thrills ya get
In a ship flying "Over the Hump".

Half round the world from home and Nell
Living in Bamboo Huts
("Bashas they call 'em"), the heat and bugs
And the damp almost drive you nuts.

To the boys in the 13th Squadron
It's like saying your ABC's,
Cross the Hump to the Lake and Mt. Tali,
Then over to Yunnanyi.

We take off from down by Doom Doom,
At a place called Sookerating,
With twenty-five drums of gasoline
To go over the Hump to Kunming.

First there's the Fort Hertz Valley
And before the Taung Pit, which is green,
We cross the Yellow Mali,
Then the third, the dark brown Salween.

We're getting to eighteen thousand,
And the engines are singin' a song
As the fourth, a red river, slips by below;
The Lantsang Kiang, or Mekong.

Across the grim Himalayas
There's a million rock peaks,
And you're sweatin' at twenty thousand
If the engine as much as squeaks;

For there's no landin' up in the mountains,
And those Japs are at Sumpra Bum,
And those widow-makers crowd on ya
Like tenement homes in a slum.

In the best of weather the hazards
'Twould take a year to tell,
But on instruments up in the "Soup" and ice
The going is really hell!

Rocky and evil and awful,
So you're scared if you have to jump:
Crossing the ocean is easy
Alongside of flying the "Hump"!

And what if you're downed in the mountians
With thousands of rocky defiles?
If the tigers and Cobras don't get you
A days work will net you three miles;

And what if you get to a river?
A raft gets you down to the Japs!
And you know that Home or for flying again
For the duration (At Least) it is "Taps"!

Did you say that you had met Bushey?
Well, in case you didn't know,
He went down on his first trip over,
A week and a half ago;

Looking? Hell, No! They're not looking!
Combing those rocky shelves?
A Hundred Years wouldn't be enough time!
They'll have to "Walk Out" by themselves.

Over the PanShan we're still going great;
To the South lies the town of Yangpi,
And we hit the South end of Lake Tali,
And then on to Yunnanyi.

Now there's many a cumulonimbus
That's turned a hair gray in my head,
And too many times have I trembled
When I thought the right Engine went Dead;

Cross the Veldt up in Tanganyika
Each foot brings A "Rockier" Bump,
But it's nothing compared to the Ride you get
With the boys flying "Over The Hump"!

It's great to hold the controls
On that Giant Man-Made Bird ---
Pratt and Whitneys singing the sweetest
Concerto you've ever heard ----

For your Heart must be in your flying,
And you swell with Intrinsic Pride;
(You see, I'm a Navigator And I just go along for the ride!).

Most of the danger is over,
And we feel pretty safe with our load
When we "Spot" that old Ribbon of Freedom
That's know as the Burma Road.

"Oil for the Lamps of China"
Was it the Poet said?
Oil and gas for American Boys!
They need it like Butter needs Bread!

We follow the road 'Cross the Mountains,
And our Airspeed jumps as we Wing
Through the Valley that leads for the last hundred miles
To our destination ---- Kunming!

Yes! I've flown from Natal to Ascension
When the scum wasn't drained from the sump,
But it's nothing compared to the thrill you get
In a ship flying "Over the Hump"!

Oh! History's page through every age
Tells of men who accomplished things,
But few there are shine a Brighter star
Than the boys with the Silver Wings!

ROCKIN' THE RIDGE

By: F/O C. R. Call

O'er the barren hills of China
By the yellow Yang't'ze,
Over brooding, Jungled Burma
From the mountains to the sea,
O'er the rugged Himalayas
From Assam to Yunnan-Yi;
There's an epic being written -
Written by the A. T. C.

To a struggling, gallant nation
Goes a giant helping hand -
'Oil - oil for the lamps of China' -
Guns for every soldier's hand.

From this sunny, steaming valley
Climbing upward to the sun -
'Cross earth's mightiest natural barrier
Wings destruction - ton by ton.

Mid the stirring tales of valor,
Deeds of daring - Men who jump
Into danger - May we mention
Just a bit about the 'Hump'?

When you're four miles nearer Heaven
And the sky is thick and black
And the thunder-heads are building
All the way to Hell and back.

Cyclones screaming 'cross the ridges
Like a dying banshee's wail -
And your props are gleaming crescents
Framed by devil's fire and hail.

Down below just matted jungle,
Towering, wind-swept mountain grags -
Lurking death to the careless pilot
Who forgot to check his mags.

High above in the seething darkness,
Raging elements hold sway.
Snow and sleet and slashing lightning,
Jarring down-drafts all the way.

To a pilot's straining senses
As he hunches o'er the wheel -
Vertigo! - Believe those gyros
For you cannot fly by feel.

Compass spinning like a dervish -
Radios dead - and - frozen loop -
Thudding ice against the cowlings
As you plow on thru the soup.

"Air-speed dropping - low fuel pressure,
R. P. M. all shot to Hell -
Engines popping - temperature rising,
Everything just going swell.

"Then at last - a hole beneath you
And an Airfield's welcome light.
Down you roar upon the runway
-Vicious cross-wind from the right.

"Home to bed and welcome slumber
Then - O death, where is thy blight?
By the shoulder rudely shaken
"Sir - you've just been called for flight!"